News Release

June 5, 1995   **No. 103**

LAUNCH OF NEGOTIATIONS TO ACHIEVE CHILE'S ACCESSION TO THE NAFTA

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, today announced that Canada and its NAFTA partners will officially launch negotiations in Toronto on June 7, 1995, to achieve Chile's accession to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"It gives me great pleasure to join my colleagues, United States Trade Representative Michael Kantor, Mexican Secretary of Trade and Industry Herminio Blanco and Chilean Finance Minister Eduardo Aninat, to initiate these negotiations that will lead to Chile's accession to the NAFTA," said Mr. MacLaren.

"The Government of Canada has worked hard during the last year to arrive at this day. We have made Chile's accession to the NAFTA a major trade policy priority. Chile's accession will ensure that the Agreement remains dynamic, flexible and outward-looking and will contribute to the impetus for further trade liberalization throughout the hemisphere.

"Chile presents exciting opportunities for Canadian businesses. Its accession to the NAFTA will strengthen our trade and investment ties," he said.

Leaders of the four countries announced on December 11, 1994, at the Miami Summit of the Americas, their intention to begin the process by which Chile would accede to the NAFTA.

Mr. MacLaren will host a meeting of the Free Trade Commission on June 7. The Commission is the NAFTA's governing body and central institution established under Chapter 20 of the Agreement. The Commission supervises implementation and oversees further elaboration of the NAFTA, and resolves disputes that may arise regarding the Agreement. The Commission also provides direction to the work of all committees and working groups.

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This is the third Commission meeting since the NAFTA came into force January 1, 1994.

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For background information on Chile's accession to the NAFTA or further information, please contact:

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